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The Fur Industry
of the
Far Eastern Republic



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FUR

The Fur Industry of the Far Eastern Republic

Hunting is still an important factor in the economic life of the Russian Far East. The forest area is very vast and the greatest part of the territory of the Far Eastern Republic is very thinly populated; therefore, hunting still remains an industry.

The heedless destruction of animal life, the disorganization of the Government apparatus during the foreign, military intervention, the decrease and sometimes absolute stoppage of government aid to the hunters—all this has greatly affected the amount of furs obtained. The seizure of large territories by the Japanese and the general instability created by the Japanese policy in Russian territory occupied by them, also affected to a great extent the fur industry; but it must be said that in spite of all these difficulties experienced by the Russian population of the Far Eastern Republic, the fur industry is still very considerable.

The territory of the Far Eastern Republic includes the following provinces: Maritime, Priamur (including the northern half of Saghalien) Amur, Zabaikal and Pribaikal. It is, however, still closely bound with the coast of the Okhotsk Sea, Kamchatka and through that with the Chukotsk peninsular and the northeastern part of the Yakutsk Province including a part of the Kolimsk district.

The Government and private firms used to supply this district with provisions through Vladivostok and the greatest part of the furs used to be shipped through Vladivostok. Close economic relations will have to continue in the future as well and consequently furs will be shipped as in former times through the territory occupied now by the Far Eastern Republic. Besides this, part of the furs of the Yakutsk Province, which reached a considerable amount in normal times, have passed and are pass-

ing through the adjacent Priamur, Amur and Zabaikal Provinces. Furs were gathered by cooperatives as well as by private individuals. At the time when there was a Government monopoly of furs in the Far Eastern Republic they were gathered mostly by cooperatives, but since September of 1921, when the fur monopoly on the territory of the Far Eastern Republic was abolished, the old methods in the fur industry were fully reestablished. The following are the furs to be found on the territory of the Far Eastern Republic and the adjacent districts:

Territory of the Far Eastern Republic

I. PRIAMUR-MARITIME DISTRICT

This district has the most abundant supply of furs in the Far Eastern Republic. If Governmental or private aid was extended to the hunters, a return to normal production could be assured. The principal centers of fur trade here are Vladivostok, Khabarovsk and Nikolae-
vsk.

II. AMUR DISTRICT

The fur industry in this district has been slight, but it is gradually increasing. The principal center of the fur trade in this section is Blagoveshchensk.

III. ZABAIKAL DISTRICT

(Including, besides the Zabaikal Province, the Pribaikal Province)

The fur industry here is in the

Fur Animals

Sable, otter, wolverine, raccoon dog, fox, squirrel, ermine, hare.

Hoofed Animals

Reindeer, muscdeer, isubr (roe) wild roebuck, elk.

Fur Animals

Sable, wolverine, raccoon, fox, squirrel, ermine, otter, hare, wolf, bear.

Hoofed Animals

Elk, wild roebuck, isubr (roe)

Fur Animals

Sable, polecat, squirrel, wolf

Hoofed Animals

Wild roebuck

process of development. The principal center of fur trade for the Zabaikal Province is Chita and for the Pribaikal, Verkhne-Udinsk.

IV. SAGHALIEN DISTRICT

(Including Shantar Islands)

Because of the heedless destruction of sables, the annual supply obtained has been decreased to 500-700 pieces. The principal center of fur trading in this section is the city of Alexandrovsk (on the Island of Saghalien)

Fur Animals

Sable, fox, ermine, wolverine, squirrel.

Hoofed Animals

Muscdeer.

Districts Adjacent to the Far Eastern Republic

I. KAMACHATKA-CHUKOTSK

(Including also a portion of the Kolimsky District)

This is the principal fur district in the entire Russian Far East. The destruction of valuable animals was very heedless in this district. This is particularly noticeable in regard to sables for which there is a great demand. During the last 20 years the number of sables has diminished almost to one fifth of the former supply. The principal centers of fur trading in this district are Petropavlovsk, Ust-Kamchatsk and Post Mari-
insk.

Fur Animals

Sable, ermine, fox (red and black), polar fox (white and blue), squirrel, wolf, wolverine, otter, sea-otter, bear, (brown, black and polar).

Hoofed Animals

Elk, reindeer.

Sea Animals

Sea lion, whale, walrus.

II COMMODORE ISLANDS

Fur Animals

These islands were very rich in valuable furs, but, owing to heedless destruction of animals, lost most of their natural wealth. In 1884 there were 1,300,000 fur seals while in 1896 there were, according to official figures, only 60,000. In later years these figures were reduced still more. Only by strict measures (prohibition to kill animals for four years from 1911-1915 and control) was it possible to prevent the final disappearance of seals from these Islands. During the last few years the number of animals visiting these islands gradually increased and reached 35,000. In regard to sea-otter, the situation is very much the same. The number of blue fox may be greatly increased by proper care. Furs from the Commodore Islands were sold in Vladivostok by a special government institution—the Department of Fishing and Hunting.

Blue fox, sea-otter, fur-seal.

III. YAKUTSK PROVINCE

Fur Animals

Lack of control and the consequent heedless destruction of animals is beginning to be felt, but the fur riches of the territory are still vast.

Sable, red and black fox, polar fox, (white and blue), squirrel, ermine, polecat, bear, wolverine, lynx, hare.

Hoofed Animals

Reindeer.

On the basis of official statistics for several years, statistics gathered by co-operative organizations (Centrosoyus) and private traders, the following table gives an approximate picture of the annual production of furs in the territory of the Far Eastern Republic.

Table No. 1

Name of Fur	Amur	Pribaikal	Zabaikal	Priamur		Saghalien	Total
				Maritime			
Sable	600	216		6,000	500		7,316
Ermine	300	56	42	2,000	600		2,998
Wolverine	200	23	13	2,000	200		2,436
Polecat	8,000	5,000	10,000	4,000			27,000
Marten				80			80
Fitchew				184			184
Fox, Red	6,000	34	48	4,000	500		10,582
Fox, Black	250			22			272
Fox, Cross	3,975						3,975
Badger	300	13	11	400			724
Raccoon dog	6,000			1,000			7,000
Otter	300	3	2	300	70		675
Hare		365	630	53,000			53,995
Marmot		58		14,185			14,223
Squirrel	125,000	180,000	250,000	2,000,000	50,500		2,605,000
Bear, brown	95	53	48	120	60		376
Bear, black	105	45	37	80	40		307
Wolf	500	186	160	173			1,019
Wild bear	200	325	120	100			745
Lynx	300	23	18	200			541
Wild-cat				50			50
Tiger				5			5
Panther				15			15
Elk	1,000	67	26	100	50		1,243
Roebuck	15,000	365	627	100			16,092
Isubr (roe)	400	58	16	100			574
Musdeer				3,000	300		3,300
Seal					100		100

The following tables numbers 2, 3 and 4 indicate the average fur production in the territories adjacent to the Far Eastern Republic and number of furs which pass through it.

Table No. 2
KAMCHATKA-CHUKOTSK
DISTRICT

Name of Animal	Average Annual Prod.	Name of Animal	Average Annual Prod.
Sable	9,000	Squirrel	2,500,000
Fox, red and cross	4,000	Fox, red	18,000
Fox, black	20	Fox, black	50
Fox, polar, white	15,000	Fox, polar	20,000
Fox, polar, blue	2,000	Fox, blue	1,000
Squirrel	100,000	Sable	3,000
Bear, brown and black	2,000	Ermine	175,000
Sea Otter	10	Polecat	60,000
River Otter	150	Hare	300,000
Otter	400	Bear	450
Bear, polar	200	Wolverine	120
Reindeer	2,000	Lynx	250
Ermine	96,000		
Polecat	60,000	Mammoth tusks from	2500-
Marten	700	3000 poods (90,000-108,000	
Seal	800	lbs.)	

Table No. 4
COMMODORE ISLANDS

Fur Seals		Sea-Otter		Blue Fox	
Year	Number	Year	Number	Year	Number
1901	10,965	1905	157	1915	1,373
1905	8,090	1916	31	1916	175*
1907	5,627	1918	24	1917	510
1909	5,811	1919	35	1918	866**
1910	3,340	1920	35	1919	1,000
1917	1,000			1920	1,000
1920	1,000*				

*The productivity of the Island is again increasing and gradually the number may be increased to 2,000 and even higher.

*Reason for decrease is the intensive killing and shortage of food in connection with prohibition of seal killing for 4 years (1911-1915)

**Number includes a few white foxes.

The following two official reports (tables numbers, 5 and 6) of the Department of Fishing, Hunting and Sea Hunting show that in spite of the difficult times experienced by the Russian Far East since 1918, the number of furs obtained is still very considerable.

Table No. 5
REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF FISHING, HUNTING AND SEA HUNTING REGARDING THE NUMBER OF HIDES, FURS, TUSKS AND SKINS OF THE MARITIME, PRIAMUR, AMUR AND KAMCHATKA DISTRICTS WHICH PASSED THROUGH THE CITY OF VLADIVOSTOK DURING 1919.

Name of Animals	Number	Pcs.	Name of Animals	Number	Pcs.
Sable	6,004		River Otter	150	
Ermine	98,894		Hare (northern)	52,949	
Wolverine	495		Marmot	14,185	
Marten	778		Squirrel	2,644,645	
Polecat	63,179		Bear, brown	88	
Fitchew	184		Bear, polar	198	
Striped squirrel	275		Bear, black	58	
Fox, Red	8,018		Wolf	173	
Fox, Black	47		Reindeer (Hide)	2,614	
Fox, Cross	3,181		Young deer	4,000	
Badger	104		Deer Skin	351	
Fox, polar, white	25,187		Fur Seal	421	
Fox, polar, blue	591		Seal	5,634	
Raccoon dog	470		Walrus tusks	185	poods
Otter	385		Lynx	336	
Sea Otter	11		Wild cat	35	
Mammoth tusks	1,370	poods	Tiger	5	
Horn of spotted deer	304	pairs	Panther	15	
Horn of isubr	68½	poods	Whale fins	34	poods

Note—1 Russian pood equals 36 lbs.

Table No. 6
EXTRACT FROM GENERAL REPORT OF FUR AUCTION HELD DURING 1918-1920 AT THE DEPARTMENT OF FISHING, HUNTING AND SEA HUNTING IN VLADIVOSTOK.

Year	Number of Furs sold		
	Sea-Otter	Fur Seal	Fox, polar, blue
1918	33		711
1919	26	599	711
1920	4	12	479
Total	63	611	1901

Remark: These auctions were held by the Government for furs

from the Commodore Islands and these show only the number of furs actually sold at auction.

The environment and conditions in the Far Eastern Republic are very favorable for fur animal breeding purposes. There is every reason to believe that farms established for the breeding of valuable animals would prove a great success. Experiments in breeding silver foxes in the United States have brought good results; and it would undoubtedly prove worth-while for experienced traders to undertake a similar enterprise in a country abounding with perfectly acclimatized and highly valuable animals. This idea had quite a few adherents among the Russian fur dealers and it may be expected that it will eventually be carried out.

LAWS

THE LAW REGULATING TRADE IN RAW MATERIALS AND FURS

Chita, September 29th, 1921

In accordance with paragraph 43 of the Constitution, the Government of the Far Eastern Republic decreed:

1. The old law regarding Government monopoly of trade in raw materials and furs of December 20th, 1920 (Collection of Laws and Ordinances of the Government of the Far Eastern Republic No. 3, paragraph 106) is to be abolished.

2. The raw materials and furs which were received by the State on the basis of the previous law regarding the monopoly, prior to the publication of the present law, are to be the property of the State and payment for the above raw materials and furs are to be made according to prices established in due time by the Ministry of Supply and Trade.

3. The raw materials and furs registered by the Ministry of Supply and Trade, but which for certain reasons did not come into the possession of the State prior to the publication of this

law, are to be turned over to the State and payment is to be made for them in accordance with regulations of paragraph 2 of this law.

4. The trade in raw materials and furs is to be under Government regulation and control on the following basis:

A. Purchase of furs and raw materials for commercial purposes, and export of raw materials and furs abroad can take place only in accordance with regulations established by law.

B. Under the heading Furs are understood to be finished and unfinished skins of animals.

C. Under the general title of Raw Materials are understood to be unfinished skins of domestic animals (horses, cows, goats, oxen, camels, sheep and pigs) the wool of domestic animals, horsehair, bristle, feathers, flax and hemp fibres.

5. The execution of this law in regard to trade in raw materials and furs and in regard to the import and export of such, is entrusted to the Ministry of Supply and Trade. The collection of corresponding assessments on raw materials and furs are to be made by the Ministry of Finance.

6. This law is to take effect from the day of its publication.

(Signed) President of the Government

N. MATVEEV

(Countersigned) Acting Chairman of the Council of Ministers

E. MATVEEV

LAW REGARDING TRADE IN FURS AND RAW MATERIALS

Chita, October 3rd, 1921.

In accordance with paragraph 43 of the Constitution and on the basis of the law of September 29th, 1921, the Government of the Far Eastern Republic decreed:

1. The purchasing of furs and raw materials on the territory of the Republic, for resale within the Republic or for export abroad, is permitted to all.

2. All individuals engaged in buying and selling of furs and raw materials within the Republic must pay in one payment for the last quarter of 1921 on account of special trade tax:

A. For buying furs and raw materials when the amount is in excess of 200,000 gold roubles—500 gold roubles.

B. For buying furs and raw materials when the amount is in excess of 100,000 gold roubles and below 200,000 gold roubles—300 gold roubles.

C. For buying furs and raw materials when the amount is in excess of 100,000 gold roubles and below 200,000 gold roubles—100 gold roubles.

D. For buying furs and raw materials when the amount is below 10,000 gold roubles—50 gold roubles.

3. To all the taxes outlined in paragraph 2 are added 25% for the local Government institutions.

Note: Assessments mentioned in paragraph 2 and 3 are paid to the State Bank or the State Treasuries whose receipts are temporarily to take the place of the necessary trade certificate.

4. When exporting furs and raw materials abroad a special export tax is to be collected, the amount being 10% of the value of the exported furs and raw materials.

5. Exporting abroad of furs and raw materials can take place only through customs offices of the 1st and 2nd class.

Remark: Only goods which were examined in the Custom Offices and on which a custom duty has been paid can be taken through town gates and frontier guards.

6. For the establishment of custom duties and other government assessments, the prices of raw materials and furs are established periodically by the Ministers of Finance, Supply and Trade, in agreement with the National Controller.

7. Inspection of raw materials and furs, calculation and payment of custom duties and other assessments as well as col-

lection for violation of rules regarding custom regulations are made in accordance with the corresponding regulations for exporting of merchandise abroad (Law of June 21st, 1914, Collection of Laws, paragraph 1788).

8. All the buyers of furs and raw materials must make a report by the 10th of each month to the Minister of Finance, or to the Representatives of the Ministry of Finance, regarding the quantity of furs and raw materials purchased during the past month.

9. The Minister of Supply and Trade and the Minister of Finance may by mutual agreement issue special instructions in connection with these laws.

10. This law is to take effect from the day of its publication.

(Signed) President of the Government

N. MATVEEV

(Countersigned) Acting Chairman of the Council of Ministers

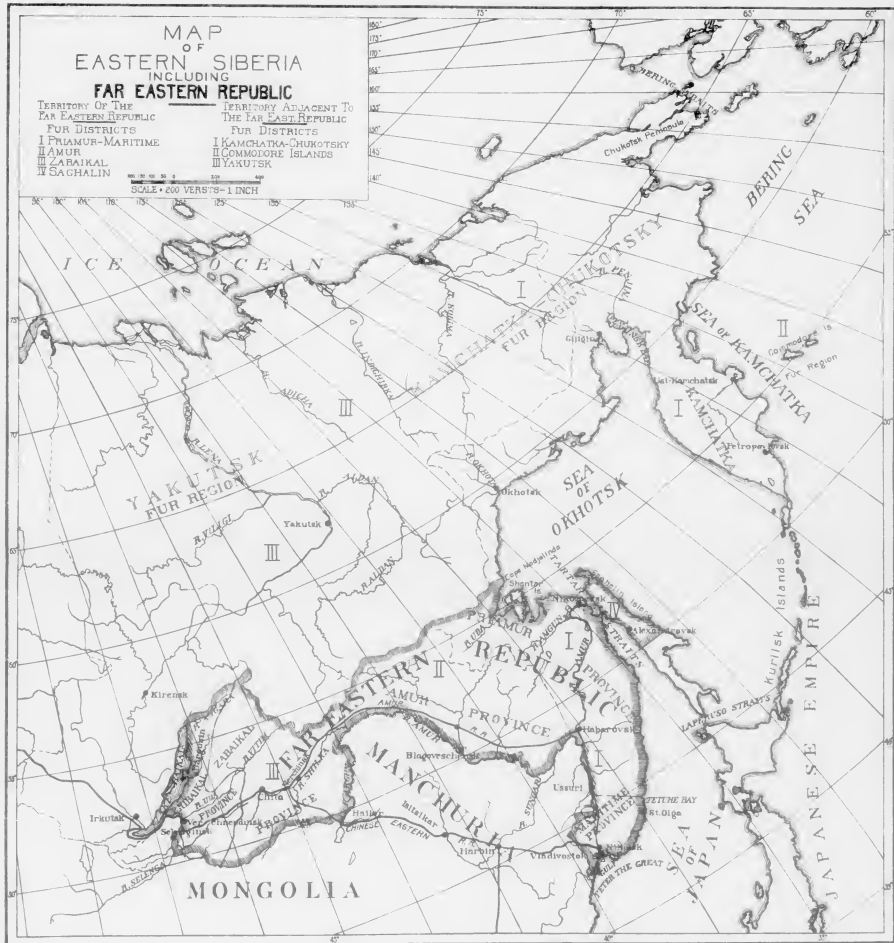
E. MATVEEV

MAP
OF
EASTERN SIBERIA
INCLUDING
FAR EASTERN REPUBLIC

TERRITORY OF THE
FAR EASTERN REPUBLIC
FUR DISTRICTS
I PRIMUR-MARITIME
II AMUR
III ZABAIKAL
IV SAGHALIN

TERRITORY ADJACENT TO
THE FAR EAST REPUBLIC
FUR DISTRICTS
I KAMCHATKA-CHUKOTSKY
II KOMMODORE ISLANDS
III YAKUTSK

SCALE: 200 VERGES = 1 INCH



1875

**END OF
TITLE**